Close at well Mill
Family deeded in Walker family for over 100 yrs
Scout troop

2125 Ames St.
Los Angeles, CA 90027
November 10, 1995

The Honorable James V. Hansen
Chairman, House Resources Subcommittee
on National Parks, Forests and Lands
812 O'Neill House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Hansen:

I am writing to strongly urge you to support H.R. 2528 authored by Congressman George Radanovich. This bill will be considered at a hearing November 14th, 1995 and I request that this letter be included in the record of that hearing.

My wife has been enjoying Mineral King for more than 65 years, having camped there as a child, and I fell in love with the place when she introduced me to it in 1945. We have owned a cabin at Mineral King since 1958 and we would hate to see this historic part of the California sierra changed.

We worked hard to prevent Mineral King from becoming commercialized in the 1970s, helping to raise funds for a film that was highly successful in publicizing the disastrous plans for development and helping to edit a newsletter, The Optimist, that kept those who wanted to preserve Mineral King as a pristine natural area, informed about developments, letting them know when letters were needed, etc. My wife also testified at a Congressional Committee hearing in Washington in support of the bill to make Mineral King part of Sequoia Park. We feel it was not the original intent of Congress to do away with the cabins at Mineral King, however the final legislation that was passed did contain such wording.

Our cabin is on a lot that was subdivided by the U.S. Forest Service expressly as a cabin site in the 1920s and the cabin has truly been used and enjoyed every summer by family members, friends, scout troops, etc. since it was built. In fact, most of the cabins in the area are now considered historic structures.

The issue of the cabins is especially important at this time, as many of the owners are now senior citizens and as they pass on, their heirs are being evicted from summer homes that have been in some families for over four generations. We feel it is a real injustice to do away with these summer homes that have been part of the scene at Mineral King for years and years.

The cabin owners are good stewards of the mountains. They understand the fragile ecology of this alpine valley and they also contribute to the tax base of Tulare County. We pay a land use tax each year, as well as a fee for our annual permit to Sequoia Park.

We understand there was very little opposition to this bill after a poll was taken by a Fresno newspaper. It would seem most appropriate to correct the injustice of the 1978 law with the passage of H.R. 2528.

Thank you for the opportunity to make our voices heard on this issue that is so important to us. Again, let us ask that this letter be made a part of the record of the hearing on November 14, 1995.

Sincerely,

Richard Koch

2023.009.0530 a

2125 Ames Street
Los Angeles, CA 90027
November 11, 1995

The Honorable James V. Hansen
Chairman, House Resources Subcommittee
on National Parks, Forests and Lands
812 O'Neill House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Hansen:

I am writing to strongly urge you to support H.R. 2528, the Mineral King Protection Act, authored by Congressman George Radanovich. The bill will be considered at a subcommittee hearing November 14, 1995 and I request that this letter be included in the record of that hearing.

We wife has been enjoying Mineral King for more than 65 years, having camped there as a child and I fell in love with the place when she introduced me to it in 1945. We would hate to see this historic part of the California sierra changed.

We worked hard to prevent Mineral King from becoming commercialized in the 1970s, helping to raise funds for a film that was highly successful in publicizing the disastrous plans for the development and helping to edit a newsletter, The Optimist, that kept those who wanted to preserve Mineral King as a pristine natural area, informed about developments, letting them know when letters were needed, etc. My wife also testified at a Congressional Committee hearing in Washington in support of the bill to make Mineral King part of Sequoia Park.

Our cabin is on a lot that was made available expressly as a cabin site by the U.S. Forest Service in the 1920s and the cabin has been well used each summer by church groups, boy scout troops, family members, friends and friends of friends. We have tried to keep it occupied as much as possible so that the joy of experiencing this beautiful valley can be shared by many. The Koch cabin has been used as a base for scouts who cleaned up back-country camps and the nature area beneath what we call The Twin Sisters (two giant Sequoia trees at the edge of the Mineral King road some eight miles from Mineral King itself) as part of the work toward merit badges.

Throughout the years, the cabin owners have been good stewards of Mineral King. They understand the fragile nature of this pristine valley and they have coexisted in harmony with other inholders at Silver City. We well remember sharing our cabin with a family that was nearly flooded out of the camp ground in a severe rain storm. We also recall having some 20 boy scouts take shelter with us when their camp became drenched. I always take my medical bag with me to Mineral King, and have ~~never refused to~~ been happy to provide medical aid to anyone needing it ~~and in the sharing spirit of Mineral King, I have never charged anyone~~. free of charge

The cabins are a part of the charm of Mineral King, some of them having existed there since the 1800s. These are truly historic structures.

The argument of the Park Service that the cabin sites at Mineral King and Faculty Flat are needed for camp sites is specious. There are numerous level areas that could be developed for camp sites. A number of years ago, Sunny Point Campground at Mineral King was closed by the Forest Service and camping was no longer allowed in the upper valley above the old store. Now we understand that the Atwell Mill Campground is scheduled to be closed in the future. If camp sites are truly needed, these closures are difficult to understand.

Thank you for this opportunity to make our voices heard on this issue that is important to many people. Again, let me ask that this letter be made a part of the record of the hearing on November 14, 1995.

Sincerely,

Richard Koch, M.D

2023.009.0530b